

◆ Black Reparations Times ◆

Volume 1, Issue 1

March 7, 2003

On to Dallas Juneteenth 03

Save the dates, 19-22 June 2003, Sisters and Brothers. N'COBRA's 14th Annual Convention is heading to the birthplace of Juneteenth—the state of Texas, and the city of Dallas.

Relying on the past experiences of other chapters, our very active N'COBRA Dallas chapter, supported by leaders throughout the southwest region, are collectively working out details for this enormous undertaking. Official registration forms and calls for participation were sent out early in 2003. Contact our N'COBRA National Office or DallasNCOBRA@hotmail.com to offer your support and recommendations. Ase`.



Reparations for the Holocaust of Enslavement and Its Vestiges

REPARATIONS LOBBYISTS ON CAPITOL HILL!

By Kibibi Tyehimba, Co-Chair, N'COBRA Legislative Commission

On January 30, 2003, 250 members of the Philadelphia Reparations Coalition converged on the nation's capitol for the Kickoff of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) Year of Black Presence (AYBP)



Ms Dorothy Lewis, N'COBRA National Co Chair & Congressman John Conyers

Lobbying initiative. This initiative, spearheaded by Philadelphia NCOBRA member and National AYBP Coordinator, Mr. Milton McGriff, will

mobilize Reparations Advocates across the country to actively work toward the passage of Reparations Study Bill, H.R. 40.

The January 30th kickoff event took place in Room 2237 of the Rayburn Building in the very room where

the House Judiciary Committee will eventually determine whether H.R. 40 will be forwarded for

(Continued on page 5)

N'COBRA'S LITIGATION WORK

by Adjoa A. Aiyetoro, Chair, Legal Strategies Commission

N'COBRA embarked upon a litigation strategy in 1997, when the Board of Directors approved the formation of the Reparations Litigation Committee. This committee is composed of reparations activists, social scientists and lawyers. Of course, some of the social scientists and lawyers are reparations activists. Many N'COBRA members have gotten dismayed because it is now 2003 and N'COBRA has not filed the lawsuit that people have been looking for: one that raises the demand for reparations for slavery and the vestiges of slavery for African descendants in the United States.

(Continued on page 2)

Black Reparations Times © 2003

<i>Anti-War and Pro-Reparations</i>	2
<i>National Reparations Weekend</i>	7
<i>N'COBRA National Five Year Strategic Plan</i>	16
<i>Japanese Americans for Black Reparations</i>	17

Anti-War and Pro-Reparations

The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA) opposes the immoral United States war against Iraq, and this country's unprovoked aggression against other Peoples around the world. We do not support people of African descent going off to fight and die in disproportionate numbers in yet another war, for a country that refuses to admit to the 500 years of terrorism it has perpetrated against African descendants, and that refuses to admit that it has a debt that must be paid to the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans.

The U.S. war against Iraq transfers wealth from African descendant communities and other communities of color that are ravaged daily by systems and institutions that benefit from our exploitation and our restricted access to wealth and power. This transfer of the nation's wealth only exacerbates our condition and lessens our ability to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable members of our communities. The resources that will be allocated for the war must be transferred to African descendant communities to right one of the most grievous crimes against humanity-the Trans-Atlantic Enslavement of African People.

African descendants are painfully aware that white supremacy, globalization, unbridled exploitation of other nations' land and resources, and the violation of other nations' right to be self-determining can ultimately lead to a recurrence of the horrors that our people suffered during the American Holocaust of African Enslavement. Therefore, we have an obligation to speak in opposition to the war against Iraq and any actions that deny People of other nations, the human rights that Americans take for granted.

January 15, 2003

{approved and distributed by N'COBRA's Board of Directors - January 2003 Board Meeting, Dallas, TX}

Legal Commission Work

(Continued from page 1)

Some have gotten downright angry – accusing the Legal Strategies Commission and its Reparations Litigation Committee of misleading the community concerning the development of the litigation. Some have asked why we have not developed litigation since others have filed litigation in the past few years while we continue to prepare.

There are a lot of legal obstacles to filing a lawsuit for reparations and we are figuring out how to get around those obstacles. We don't want to file something that may make you feel good, like we are doing something, only to end up spending lots of time and money on a losing case – one that we knew or should have known when we filed it would not be successful. We want to develop a lawsuit that we feel has a good chance of succeeding.

We understand the frustration of the community since we put out there that N'COBRA was developing reparations litigation. It was a mistake to put a time frame on the filing of a lawsuit. Many of you rightfully wanted to hold us to the projected date; however, the difficulties encountered in putting a lawsuit together against the government have resulted in significant time delays. We no longer give a date for the filing, because of this.

“It was a mistake to put a time frame on the filing of a lawsuit”

There is another issue that perhaps has confused many of our members and supporters. N'COBRA voted in June 2001 at the Baton Rouge conference to have Adjoa A. Aiyetoro serve as co-chair of the Reparations Coordinating Committee (RCC). The RCC was formed in August 2000 by Randall Robinson and Charles Ogletree. Adjoa was asked to participate, representing N'COBRA and later Dorothy Benton Lewis participated representing N'COBRA as well. The confusion is that many of our people don't want to see this as N'COBRA litigation work when in

(Continued on page 4)

From National Co-Chairs Aurevouche Dorothy Benton Lewis & Jahahara Alkebulan-Ma'at

Greetings N'COBRA Family!

Peace and Blessings for a Happy, Healthy, Prosperous New Year!

Yea though we walk through the valley of wars and rumors of wars, we stay the course. We yield to no distractions. We do our job, Satan does his. We know we will be the victor.

We give thanks to You, the Ancestors, and the Great Spirit for another outstanding year of accomplishments through work, faith, and love. May we all be energized by our love for the God within us, love for our families, for each other, and the vision we hold for our children and our future. Let us continue to step out on faith knowing that the path of our divine mission will be lighted with each step. Let us take time to look with amazement at the miracles we create from nothing. Let us marvel at our brilliance, but only for a moment for we have yet another mountain to climb.

For some of us, mountain climbing is a struggle, for others it is good exercise, but many of us see mountain climbing as a spiritual journey. Along the way, we face our demons; some find God, some find ourselves, some find each other. So, let us keep moving toward the mark, knowing that there is value in the journey whether we are in the valley, on the plateau, or at the mountain's peak from where we see the next mountain. For, it is all God's work and we graciously surrender to the work, knowing that our on-the-job training is divinely guided and inspired.

Much love and appreciation for all that you do.

Asante Sana N'COBRA Detroit

By Jahahara Alkebulan-Ma'at

Many, many thanks and sincere appreciation to the members of N'COBRA's dynamic Detroit, Michigan Chapter for their expert organizing of N'COBRA's 13th Annual Convention.

Held this past June at the beautiful, elegant and 100 percent African-American owned St. Regis Hotel, the Convention focused on the very appropriate theme "REPARATIONS, NOW: A United Stand Against Over 500 Years of Terrorism." Addressing hundreds of participants with their great wisdom were keynoters, such as the admitted "hoodlum-to-judge" Greg Mathis and Congressman John Conyers, (both natives of MoTown), President Ukali Mwendu of the Republic of New Afrika (one of the groups that founded N'COBRA), the founder of KWANZAA Dr. Maulana Karenga, Dr. Ron Daniels of the new Institute of the Black World, and Dr. Conrad Worrill of the National Black United Front. International presenters included our great Ancestor FRANTZ FANON's daughter Muriel Fanon from France; Attorney Esther Stanford, a leading activist for Reparations in England; and the dynamic legal scholar, Leonard Hinds.

Among our many cultural events were a sunrise spiritual gathering on Belle Isle, where many of our enslaved Ancestors

launched their escape from the U.S. to Canada; a special acknowledgement and call for immediate release and amnesty for hundreds of our long-suffering political prisoners and exiles (former POW Baba Herman Ferguson, founder of our N'COBRA Rochdale Village Queens, NY was introduced); a fabulous tour of African-centered and other important landmarks in the Detroit area; inspirational dancing from local youth, and music by a former member of the mighty Impressions. Helping the N'COBRA Detroit chapter tie it altogether were our dedicated founders, members of the Board of Directors, Commission co-chairs, and regional and chapter leaders from around the U.S.

During the convention the General membership elected to not only participate in the 17 August 2002 Reparations March (called by the December 12th Movement and NBUF); but to use the occasion to host an *inclusive, democratic, African-centered* N'COBRA sponsored event on 16 August to highlight "Black Friday", and to maintain a visible N'COBRA presence during the march the following day.

Other Convention decisions focused on expanding our

(Continued on page 6)

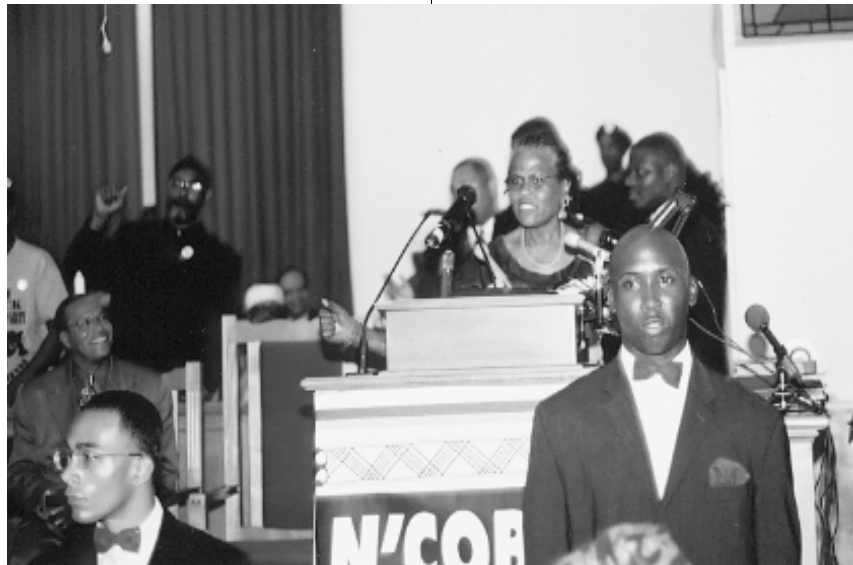
Legal Commission Work (Continued from page 2)

fact it is. We joined the RCC to advance the reparations litigation work. Although we understand that people are wowed by the star factor of a Johnny Cochran or Randall Robinson, our leadership role in the RCC has been misunderstood by many and dismissed by others. Yet, we have a significant role in the RCC and through our participation, litigation development has been advanced.

The RCC filed the first of what will be a series of lawsuits in the federal district court in Tulsa, Oklahoma on February 24, 2003. Of course, this case is not about all African descendants in the United States, although since it speaks to the vulnerability of African descendants to mob violence, particularly in the

early 20th Century, it is. This case is not about slavery, although since it describes conditions of violence, detention and forced servitude that are reminiscent of slavery, it is. This case is not about the vestiges of slavery, although since the African descendants in the Greenwood district were subjected to the presumption of the validity of white supremacy that was a hallmark of slavery, it is. N'COBRA's website, www.ncobra.org, has the complete Tulsa Complaint for your review.

So, this first reparations lawsuit filed by the RCC, is N'COBRA's first reparations lawsuit as well. As a viable member of the RCC, we have chosen to work in coalition with Charles Ogletree, Randall Robinson and the other members of the RCC, some of whom are also N'COBRA members such as Ron Walters, a member of our elder advisory board, and Rose Sanders. Charles Ogletree is also a member of N'COBRA. This suit is consistent with N'COBRA's mission, to obtain reparations for not only chattel slavery, but the vestiges of slavery. Its focus on Tulsa is at the same time a focus on all our communities that have suffered white mob violence. Its focus on the demand that the city and state pay reparations and restitution to the survivors and descendants for their role in the destruction of African descendants homes and businesses and brutalization of their families is a demand for justice for all of us.



Atty Aiyetoro brings the crowd to their feet as Min. Farrakhan smilingly looks on

Tulsa is not the end of our litigation work. Nor is it the beginning. N'COBRA and the National Conference of Black Lawyers filed an amicus brief in the United States Supreme Court on February 14, 2003, supporting the University of Michigan's affirmative action and diversity programs. The amicus brief makes a strong argument that the University of Michigan's affirmative action and diversity programs are required as reparations to African descendants. This brief can also be seen by going to N'COBRA's website: www.ncobra.org.

It is important that we see N'COBRA's litigation work in a broad context: coalition work with other groups that have a similar vision is not only appropriate but essential since N'COBRA is itself a coalition. At the same time, N'COBRA's Legal Strategies Commission and Litigation Committee are continuing to develop litigation that may not be joined by other groups. It is also important to see that every piece of litigation that is filed may not be litigation that N'COBRA will

join because, among other reasons, N'COBRA's human and financial resources do not allow it to become part of every litigation effort. Finally, there may be differences among N'COBRA and other groups concerning the approach to take. These differences may result in N'COBRA not being a part of some litigation efforts. Despite the differences, we hold the good thought that other individuals and groups are as sincere in their efforts to obtain reparations as is N'COBRA. The combined energy of all our efforts will result in obtaining reparations for African descendants in the United States. It also will combine with efforts internationally to obtain reparations for African and African descendants worldwide.

REPARATIONS NOW!

IN OUR LIFE TIME

AYBP (Continued from page 1)

debate on the House floor. To pave the road, Mama Nia Kuumba, a founding member of N'COBRA, member of N'COBRA's Elders Council, and member of the DC Chapter of N'COBRA, started the event by pouring a powerful libation to call forth the energies of our ancestors for whom we demand Reparations. She called on all the freedom fighters, known and unknown, all the countless and nameless men, women, and children, whose lives were sacrificed building this country, and she asked for the blessings of the Creator, as we continue on our sacred path to victory. Prayers were also offered by Reverend Chaney of Philadelphia's House of the Lord Pentecostal Church, and from the Islamic tradition by Mr. Wesley Wilson Bey of the Moorish Unification Council of America. This powerful beginning demonstrated our commitment to moving beyond religion and other barriers created by our sojourn in this country, and achieving Reparations in our lifetime.

Brief statements were provided by AYBP National Coordinator, Mr. Milt McGriff, and Philadelphia Co-Chair Mr. Rob Bell, which laid out the historical and

moral justification for our quest for Reparations, and highlighted the significance of AYBP in achieving that goal. N'COBRA Legislative Commission Co-Chair, Ms. Nkechi Taifa spoke to the growing synergy in the Reparations Movement, and Mr. Keenan Keller, Judiciary Counsel to Congressman John Conyers Jr., brought greetings and words of encouragement from the Congressman who was unable to attend. N'COBRA National Co-Chair Ms. Dorothy Lewis congratulated the Philadelphia Reparations Coalition for their tremendous turnout, and also reminded us of the sacredness of our quest for Reparations. The group was inspired by the poetry of four strong sister warriors who are part of the group "In the Company of Poets". And if the purpose of music is to prepare the people to move then we must extend our greatest appreciation to "The Trane Stop Institute" for bringing forth the rhythm of the drum, and giving us the energy to take on the formidable task ahead.

The Philadelphia Coalition, made up of the Philadelphia Chapter of N'COBRA, the African American Freedom and Reconstruction League, House of the Lord Pentecostal Church, Trane Stop Resource Institute, the Philadelphia Branch of the NAACP, Mother Bethel AME Church, the Philadelphia Chapter of the UNIA, Philadelphia Black Radical Congress, and the Lost Found Nation of Islam separated into groups, which then moved out to engage members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and their State Representatives in both the

House and the Senate, on the issue of Reparations. Pennsylvania's CBC members have all endorsed H.R. 40, but there's still work to be done with their remaining members of Congress. In addition to lobbying Pennsylvania representatives, a small group set out to meet with Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin, chairman of the Judiciary Committee who has stated that H. R. 40 will never receive a hearing. All future lobbying sessions must include a visit to Congressman Sensenbrenner's office until he is able to see the light.

While the lobbying continued at the Rayburn Building, the smaller group of lobbyists ventured into the Hart Building to address Pennsylvania Senators. Luckily, Mr. Keenan Keller was able to escort us through the underground corridors. We decided to board the Congressional underground train to hasten our journey. As

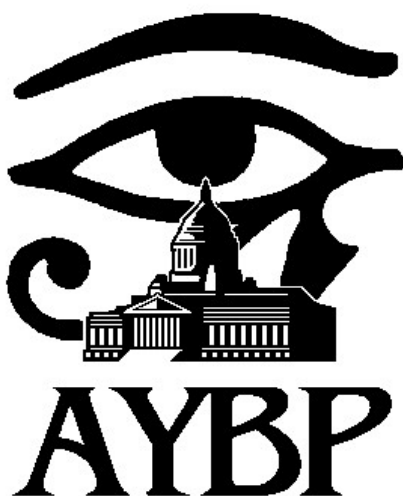
the train moved along, we all took note of something that is surely a very powerful sign from the Creator. We sat with smiles on our faces as the train passed Senators Trent Lott and Orin Hatch who were walking together, no doubt hatching some plan to move this country back to the days of open segregation. We all believe in our hearts that the message was clear-- that we will be victorious, and we will leave behind the likes of Trent Lott and Orin Hatch and any others, who attempt to deny the African descendants' demand for Reparations.

The group had a full day of lobbying. Although there were no new

Representatives persuaded to endorse H.R. 40, the event was an excellent opportunity to hone our lobbying skills, and commit to staying the course.

On February 25, in commemoration of Reparations Awareness Day, the DC Metropolitan Chapter of N'COBRA and other Reparations Advocates gathered at the nation's capitol for another day of lobbying for the passage of Reparations Study Bill H.R. 40. It is more and more apparent that the Reparations momentum is mounting as evidenced by the presence of and participation in the day's lobbying effort by leaders from organizations with significant national and international constituencies. Mr. Ken Fealing, Director of Civil and Human Rights for the United Methodist Church represented the faith-based organization with membership totaling approximately 9 Million. This predominantly white international organization has already passed a Reparations Resolution, and has commissioned a task force to study this and other issues which impact African Americans. Mr. Hilary Shelton, Director of the Washington Bureau of the NAACP, whose internationally based membership totals

(Continued on page 12)



N'COBRA DETROIT (Continued from page 3)

collective efforts to educate and involve our people in Reparations' solutions by strengthening our chapter-building strategies and the work of the Economic Development commission; to intensify our pressure on political candidates running for public office to urge their support of H.R. 40 during this year's elections; to send a delegation to the African Descendants Caucus' follow-up conference to the United Nations' "World Conference Against Racism," that will take place in Barbados; to raise the necessary funds to file and sustain our class-action lawsuit against the U.S. government.

We are especially grateful to the team of leaders in the Detroit area for their commitment, hospitality and perseverance. Special Salutes to Dr. JoAnn Watson, Stanley Bragg, Lillian Brown, Raymond "Reparations Ray" Jenkins, Sherylynn Robinson, Ben Looney, Billie Parrish, Cicero Love, Maya Watson, Dr. Robert Bland, Mary Ann Hinds, Mary Ruffin-Williams, Minister Malik Shabazz... and so many other wonderful members, such as N'COBRA's Midwest Region Representative Alvin Brown, our national co-chairs, and Board members.

Congratulations Detroit N'COBRA for a job well done. ASANTE SANA (many, many thanks) . WE Love You All!

**SOUTHWEST REGIONAL
CONFERENCE**

Submitted by:
Bobby R. Scott, Dallas N'COBRA Chapter &
Lady Claudia Nelson, N'COBRA National Secretary

The New Orleans Chapter hosted the Southwest Regional Conference on Saturday, March 15th, 2003 at the Andrew Bell Middle School in New Orleans, LA. The conference was attended by chapter members from Dallas, Texas, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette, Louisiana. The theme of the conference was "Educate, Organize, and Mobilize". Workshops were conducted concurrently during the am and pm sessions on Chapter Building for Reparations, Reparations 101, Reparations: A Global Perspective, and Coalition Building and Recruitment. There was also a timely, and informative examination of the history of African American participation in the military in a workshop entitled "No H.R. 40 No Draft". Chapters were encouraged to consider the importance of marketing Reparations information to African descendants in ways that are easily understood and identified

(Continued on page 14)

**"ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE,
ORGANIZE"**

By Ajamu Sankofa,
N'COBRA Northeast Regional Representative

"Organize, organize, organize" was a clarion call to action taught to us by our esteemed ancestor, Kwame Toure. Brother Toure brilliantly popularized not only the term "Black Power" but he also nurtured the experience of African empowerment and beauty by actively organizing our people.

The N'COBRA Northeast Regional Meeting, held on October 19, 2002 in NYC chose "organize, organize, organize" as its theme and purpose because that work is still our work. Over seventy-five people attended.

The meeting held two powerful workshops. Lively constructive dialog among all attendees characterized both workshops.

The first workshop posed the question, "How Does the African Community Organize for Reparations in the Belly of the Beast?" The panelist were multigenerational veteran organizers that included Herman Ferguson, co-chair of the N'COBRA Queens Rochdale Chapter; Rosa Clemente, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement; Monifa Bandele, National co-chair of Malcolm X Grassroots Movement; Duane Andre, leader in the Haitian Coalition for Justice; Kibibi Tyehimba, co-chair of N'COBRA DC Chapter; and Khalil Amusthafa, poetry editor of The Paper and co-founder of Youth for Reparations. This workshop was moderated by Linda Roots, female co-chair of the New York Metro Area N'COBRA Chapter and Wautella ibn Yusuf, male co-chair of the DC N'COBRA Chapter.

This workshop produced a list of specific recommendations for organizing our community.

The recommendations included:

1. Develop joint activities among organizational N'COBRA members that directly build the capacities for all organizations to win Reparations;
2. Do bottom up organizing. For example, before going to the church pastor, first organize a few of the church members who then go to the church pastor;
3. Translate Reparations materials into Spanish and Creole;
4. Physically go into the streets and engage our people using the voter registration model;
5. Always keep a grassroots and inclusive focus;
6. Strategically plan activities;
7. Actively include the arts in all of our organizing work;
8. Take a long view, do not expect microwave results, and remain consistent and persistent with our eyes on the prize of Reparations.

Attendees, many of whom were community activists who had

(Continued on page 8)

NATIONAL REPARATIONS WEEKEND: A Movement in the Making!

Kibibi Tyehimba,
Co-Chair DC Metro Chapter of N'COBRA

In the not too distant future, August 16-17 2002 will be marked as one of the major milestones in the growing Reparations movement. This past weekend, Tens of thousands of African Americans converged on the nation's capitol to demonstrate their demand for Reparations in our lifetime. It was the first mass Reparations mobilization effort in this century, and the enthusiasm oozing from all the participants clearly demonstrated it won't be the last.

The Millions for Reparations demonstration, which also commemorated the 115th birthday of the honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, was in response to a call to action issued by the Durban 400 following the World Conference Against Racism in Durban

South Africa. Although the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA) did not issue the call, the Coalition supported it and encourage its members to participate because of its commitment to supporting any genuine efforts to further the cause for Reparations.

The weekend began with a "Black Friday" observance organized by NCOBRA. African Americans and their allies were encouraged to only spend their dollars with Black owned businesses for the entire day to increase the circulation of money within the Black Community. Although "Buy Black" campaigns have been instituted in the past, it is hoped that the Reparations movement will motivate a long range commitment to this effort.

On Friday evening N'COBRA hosted a Pre-Demonstration National Reparations Rally and Forum, at Plymouth Congregational Church in Northwest DC. Reverend Haglar

and Plymouth Congregational Church should be commended for allowing access to a standing room only and overflowing crowd, particularly since far too few leaders in the African American Faith Community have come out to publicly support Reparations, with the notable exception of Rev. Willie Wilson, pastor of Union Temple Baptist church, and recently declared candidate for mayor of Washington, DC. The Rally will certainly be remembered by all those in attendance, as an event that rivaled some of the most important milestones during the

Civil Rights movement. The speakers ranged from the conservative to what is perceived to be the most radical. Nation of Islam leader, Minister Louis Farrakhan, keynote speaker for the evening, spoke at length about the moral justification for the Reparations movement, the Nation of Islam's history of support for the issue, te importance of land as part of the demand for Reparations, and a call for unity and the formation of a united Reparations Front resonated throughout. Minister

Farrakhan spoke of the Reparations movement as a prime opportunity to unite, heal and repair African families and communities.

Other speakers for the evening included Dr. Imari Obadele, founder of NCOBRA; male and female co-chairs, Ms. Dorothy Benton-Lewis and Mr. Jahahara Alkebulan Ma'at; Ms. Adjoa Aiyetoro, Esq., Co-Chair of the NCOBRA Legal Commission; Mr. Charles Ogletree, Esq., Professor of Law at Harvard School of Law and Co-Chair of the Reparations Coordinating Council, which will file a class action Reparations law suit in the fall of 2002; Dr. Maulana Karenga, Chair of US Organization and creator of Kwanzaa; Dr. Conrad Worrill, founder and chairman of the National Black United Front; Dr. Ron Daniels, founder and CEO of the Institute of the Black World, and candidate for the presidency of the U.S in the 1992 election; Ms. Harriet Frost of the Rosewood Idella



Minister Louis Farrakhan, keynote speaker

Minister Louis Farrakhan greeted the crowd with a message for unity and increased commitment to making Reparations a reality.

(Continued on page 9)

“Organize, Organize, Organize” *(Continued from page 6)*

just heard of the meeting, came forward to give examples of their best practices.

The second workshop demonstrated the unbroken chain of destruction that leads directly from chattel enslavement of African people in this north american territory to present-day non-education and miss-education of African people in this same territory. The expert panelists included: Malik Lewis, editor of the Black student newspaper called “The Paper”; Basir Mchawi, African-centered educator, activist, and host of WBAI radio talk show “Education at the Crossroads”; Dr. Mary Hoover, Professor of literacy and reading, Howard Univ. School of Education and chair of N’COBRA Education Commission and student advisor to the N’COBRA Howard University student chapter; Dr. Sam Anderson, community activist, Prof. of Mathematics Medgar Evers College, and founder of Reparations Mobilization Committee; Bertha Lewis, community activist and Director of Education, ACORN; Gilda Sherrod-Ali, Esq., former public school teacher and member of the Education Sub-Committee of N’COBRA’s Legal Commission; Iyalua Ferguson, veteran educator and retired NYC Public High School Teacher; and Bruce Ellis and Ayo Harrington, grassroots advocates for education. This three- hour workshop was moderated by New York State Assemblymen, Roger Green who last year introduced a Reparations Bill in the NY State Assembly.

The workshop buttressed the working alliance between NYS Assemblymen Roger Green and grassroots community leaders for the struggle to pass the state Reparations legislation that he has introduced.

Five NCOBRA Chapters from NYC, Wash. DC., and Philadelphia presented reports of their very extensive organizing work. National Board member Kalonji Olusegun reported on N’COBRA’s National Black Fridays campaign which is designed to keep Black dollars in the Black community while building firm support among the Black business community for Reparations. Milt McGriff, N’COBRA’s National Coordinator of A Year Black Presence (AYBP), gave a report on the strategies and tactics of AYBP, the powerful effort to gain passage of US Congressmen’s John Conyers Reparations study Bill, HR 40. Lastly, Gilda Sherrod-Ali reported on N’COBRA’s litigation strategy.

Veteran actor Clebert Ford performed Langston Hughes, “I’ve Known Rivers,” while Kahlil Mustafa slammed some knowledge on us with his original poetry.

The meeting was video and audio taped by the NYC based Sound Gatherers.

The results of the meeting strengthened the reparations movement because African grassroots activists, progressive intellectuals and cultural workers mixed it up for Reparations

such that organizational and individual membership in N’COBRA grew, solid friendships began, and most importantly an effective process for organizing our community was demonstrated.

It was a long day but all of our ancestors who had worked tirelessly to organize our people for freedom would have been proud. Indeed they were present.

**CAMPAIGN FOR 100%
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK
CAUCUS SUPPORT FOR H.R.40!!!**

Kibibi Tyehimba,
Co-Chair N’COBRA Legislative Commission

March 5, 2003 UPDATE

Reparations supporters, write letters, call, and/or FAX your disappointment and your intentions of voting non-Reparations supporters out of office if they do not support our cause. Remember letters and faxes cannot be just a form letter. They must be personalized to demonstrate they are in fact the opinions of individual voters. Organize large numbers of callers to flood Representatives’ State office phone lines during designated time periods. Reparations supporters in several states can coordinate mass phone campaigns to tie up the phone lines of several Representatives’ Capitol Hill offices. Take this BULL by the horns, and know that the battle is already won, once the heart believes in victory. The power to win Reparations is
i n o u r h a n d s .

The following are the co-sponsors of H.R.40 presented to the 108th Congress as of March 5, 2003:

Mr. CONYERS (for himself), Mr. SANFORD BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KILPATRICK, Ms. BARBARA LEE of California, Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. Kendrick MEEK of Florida, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHN OLVER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. WYNN)

The following Representatives committed to co-sponsor H. R.40 during recent NCOBRA "A Year of Black Presence" Lobbying days:

(Continued on page 13)

National Weekend

(Continued from page 7)

Carrier Foundation, which is the only group of African Americans to receive reparations to date; Mr. Gary Grant of the Black Farmers Association currently embroiled in a confrontation with the United States Department of Agriculture for its documented discrimination against Black Farmers' who have sought farm subsidies throughout the 20th century; Mr. Hilary Shelton, director of the Washington, DC Branch of the NAACP; Mr. Damu Smith, director of the National Black Environmental Justice Network; Mr. Malik Zulu Shabazz, Esq. of the New Black Panther Party; Mr. Senghor Baye of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA); and Mr. Omali Yeshitela of the African People's Socialist Party. All the speakers were able to show a clear connection between their organization's primary mission and the Reparations movement. Of course no event of this caliber would be complete without some form of artistic expression. The night ended with a reading of a poem written by Washington's own Ms. Laini Mataka, and a very energizing song by Baba Doc entitled "I Want My Money".

Saturday morning, August 17, 2002, Reparations supporters gathered at Lincoln Park in Southeast DC to participate in a Spiritual Gathering to commemorate the sacrifices of African Ancestors during the American era of enslavement.

The African Diaspora Ancestral Commemoration Institute (ADACI) orchestrated the building of a beautiful altar in front of the Mary McCloud Bethune statue. Ms. Tendai Johnson, Mwangaza Michael-Bandele, Paula Jones, and Eureka Huggins and all the members of the community who assisted, should be commended for their superb work. Participants in the event placed pictures and tiny placards with the names of their ancestors around the altar. The altar even incorporated several of the emotionally charged illustrations from the book "Middle Passage" by Mr. Tom Feelings, who voluntarily brought them all the way from South Carolina. Mr. Feelings indicated that he initially created the book to assist the descendents of formerly enslaved Africans with the healing and repair process that is so important in the Reparations movement. The local chapter of the UNIA, under the leadership of Minister Ahmed Assalaam, honored the life and legacy of Marcus



*Mr. Omali Yeshitela,
African People's Socialist Party*

Mosiah Garvey, a strong advocate of Reparations and Repatriation in the early part of the 20th century. Under the leadership of the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, the UNIA boasted 1100 branches in more than 40 countries around the world. Garvey's "Race First" message awakened the consciousness of black people, and advocated racial pride and dignity among blacks around the world. Later that morning the crowd of Reparations supporters marched

down East Capitol behind the "Red, Black and Green" Flag designed by the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, and the NCOBRA Banner towards the demonstration site in front of the Capitol building.

By noon the grounds immediately in front of the Capitol building were beginning to fill up. Despite the oppressive August heat and humidity, thousands of Reparations supporters were out in full force with banners, t-shirts with an array of Reparations slogans, and their voices raised in support of the issue. No, there were not a million people in attendance as the name of the march implies. But one thing is clear, the support for this issue is growing by leaps and bounds, and considering that a demonstration of this magnitude or smaller would have been virtually impossible 30 years ago, the organizers of the demonstration and all those who worked tirelessly to make it happen should be congratulated. No one ever knows what event in history will be the one to thrust a movement forward. Surely in

1955 Rosa Parks had no way of knowing that her refusal to give up her seat to a white man would be the catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement. Eventually, history will reveal the significance of August 17, 2002.

Minister Louis Farrakhan greeted the crowd with a message for unity and increased commitment to making Reparations a reality. Congressman John Conyers Jr. of Detroit Michigan, and champion for the H.R. 40 Reparations Bill, submitted to Congress every year since 1989, also raised his voice in support of the issue. Councilman Charles Barron of New York, who recently introduced one of the most extensive Reparations Bills also addressed the crowd. There were few of the notables that one would expect to see and hear at an event such as this. The organizers of the demonstration, very early on, expressed a desire to give the masses center stage,

(Continued on page 11)

A Brief Description of the Reparations Work and Political Conditions in Northern California

by Mr. Jean Damu, Co-Chair San Francisco N'COBRA Chapter

Keeping in mind the struggle for African American reparations in the United States will be long and protracted and that the reparation process will probably take place over the course of several generations we offer the following comments.

California in general is a good place to develop political strategies in the fight for reparations because the state and political bodies within the state are not directly tied to slavery. The state is also a good place to develop political strategies because of its bell-weather role on the American political scene. To date the California legislature is one of only two such bodies that have endorsed H.R. 40 and the only one, as far as I know that mandated its university system to hold two colloquiums (eventually three were held) on slavery and its legacy. And California is the only state that has a slavery insurance index that is available on the internet for all interested in genealogy or filing lawsuits. Finally the current California governor, Grey Davis has publicly stated he thinks reparations "is a good idea."

Despite these favorable conditions the reality of the matter is generally political organizations that have focused on reparations have not taken advantage of these pluses. In the San Francisco-Bay Area we have, for the past 18 months begun to lay the basis for what we project as a strong reparations movement headed by N'COBRA and the California Coalition for H.R. 40.

Why two organizations? Those of us who first began the N'COBRA work in San Francisco have as our political base the trade union movement. We are from the longshore and hotel workers unions. When we first began to appear before our union's executive bodies to ask for support and endorsements we found greater success and acceptance addressing larger numbers of people, many of them non-black, on the issue of African American reparations, by focusing on H.R. 40. Soon we came to the conclusion there needed to be an organization, more or less in lock step with N'COBRA, focused specifically on H.R. 40. There is much more to this issue but that is it in a nutshell.

Our primary long range task is to get as many of the California Congressional Delegation as possible to sign on to H.R. 40. Nancy Pelosi, San Francisco's congressional delegate and Democratic Minority Whip is our number one target but we have not aimed at her yet. First we want the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to endorse H.R. 40, then possibly the city and state Democratic parties. We think, we hope, we are close to getting that resolution passed.

We have begun to lay the basis of this by meeting with labor unions, churches and community based organizations getting

endorsements and support. (I will include an attachment with our local supporters and endorsers.)

We learn as we go. We have started some projects that did not pan out. Other times the literature we gave out was inappropriate. For instance Monday at noon I'm speaking at a brown bag lunch meeting with 20 kids from the Tower Projects in S.F. on reparations. I faxed the co-coordinator a four page article on reparations to prepare them. She called back saying "keep it simple. Four pages is way too much." I will prepare a one page handout explaining how to "say" reparations and then some bullets about what reparations is.

What we have in motion and upcoming engagements

1. A Juneteenth event in conjunction with the San Francisco Dept. of public Health "Black Health and Reparations" featuring Vernellia Randall and Jewel Crawford.
2. An appearance before the San Leandro city council on H.R. 40. They won't endorse it but we're doing it for informational purposes.
3. An appearance before the Rotary Club in Oakland.
4. A meeting with BAPAC. The Black American Political Action Committee, chaired by Percy Pinckney, Senator Dianne Feinstein's chief political consultant, has 60,000 members in California. George McCutcheon a lifetime member of NCOBRA and special assistant to Percy Pinckney is the facilitator.
5. Creating a high school curriculum on reparations with Daphne Muse.
6. Designing a multi-colored postcard sized handout for young people on reparations- like handouts hip-hoppers make for concerts.
7. WE are in the initial stages of planning a large meeting on reparations utilizing Adjoa, to capitalize on the Black health and Reparations conference to build regional, possibly statewide support for reparations. We have been projecting such a conference since we began this work 18 months ago but we are now getting closer to the time it may become possible.

We are building a website.

These are some of the things we have developed over the recent period of time. There are many, many weaknesses and problems. But we've found that just by staying focused and continuing to show up things get better and finally accomplished. But N'COBRA wrote the book on staying focused and continuing to show up.

Remembering Baba**KENNETH BRIDGES**

by Jahahara Amen-RA Alkebulan-Ma'at,
National Co-Chair

African people around the U.S. and Diaspora are honoring the life and work of Brother KEN BRIDGES, one of several victims in the sniper killings in the Washington, DC metro area this past October.

Brother Bridges and his beloved wife, Sister Jocelyn English-Bridges, were been blessed with six children—Aya, April, Justin, Joshua, Alona, and Alyssa—to carry on their family legacy.

For the past quarter century, Brother Bridges had been in the forefront of our very necessary Black economic development, self-sufficiency, and internal Reparations efforts. With colleague Al Wellington, he co-founded several important programs, including: P.O.W.E.R. (People Organized and Working for Economic Rebirth) collaboration on product distribution collaboration with others, like the George Johnson's Products Company and Minister Louis Farrakhan, in the 1980s; Correction Connection, Inc., distributor of Dick Gregory's "Bahamian Diet"; and All America Film & Videos. Based on mass surveys conducted at the 1995 Million Man March, Bridges and Wellington created the MATAH Network, which now has nearly 300 items in its catalog. N'COBRA is extremely proud that Brother Bridges chose to be a paid member of our alliance. He was patiently teaching our constituency the importance of economic self-reliance as an integral part of Reparations. Most recently, he participated in N'COBRA's 13th Convention in Detroit, this past June; and during the Black Friday and Reparations March in Washington, in August 2002.

N'COBRA members and supporters are encouraged to continue building on the great work of our new Ancestor. Show your family's and organization's support by contributing to the Ken Bridges Memorial Fund, c/o Milligan & Co., CPAs, 105 North 22nd Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103. To contact the MATAH Network, call 1.800.977.MATAH or visit www.matah.com Amen.

Ancestor
**Kenneth
Bridges**

1949-2002

**"BLACK REPARATIONS TIMES"**

In response to the growing momentum of the Reparations movement, the Information and Media Commission is committed to disseminating timely information on issues related to our struggle for Reparations. Our new publication, "BLACK REPARATIONS TIMES" © 2003 is a step up from the N'COBRA membership newsletter "REPARATIONS NOW!", and will report news and information not only about N'COBRA's work, but also the efforts of other Reparations advocates, nationally and internationally. Please let us know what you think of our first edition of "BLACK REPARATIONS TIMES". Your suggestions are always welcome. You can also help out by: 1) providing items for possible publication such as articles, photos, etc; 2) volunteering professional skills (graphic arts, managing subscriptions & distribution, fundraising, etc.); 3) donating generously to this project, and 4) identifying potential sponsors.

Contact information:

Information and Media Commission
P.O. Box 716
Washington, DC 200440-0716

Email: InformationMedia@aol.com
Phone: 202.466.1622

National Reparations Weekend

(Continued from page 9)

so that it would be clear how they view the Reparations Movement. The presenters and participants during the course of the day, did not include sufficient representation from African American and other progressive organizations who's large constituencies will be critical to the success of the Reparations Movement. But then, this was the first mass mobilization effort. As the movement continues to grow, there's no doubt the people will demand that all Reparations initiatives be more inclusive.

Saturday evening was rounded out with a "Rappin' for Reparations" poetry slam hosted by the Howard University student chapter of NCOBRA, under the leadership of Ms. Fahima Seck and Mr. Julius Jefferson, and advisor and long time N'COBRA member Dr. Mary Hoover. The energy was high, and the poetry and songs were powerful. Historically, artists have played a very important role in African American human rights struggles. It was good to see that the tradition is still alive and well. And of course it is heartening to see the young people rising up, and ready to receive the baton from their elders. And everyone knows, once you capture the imagination of the youth, victory is inevitable.

AYBP (Continued from page 5)

approximately a half million, reported the NAACP's commitment to the passage of H.R. 40 as part of its core legislative agenda for the 108th Congress. Mr. Shelton also lent his energy to the lobbying effort. Nation of Islam Minister Khadir Abdul Muhammad, East Coast Representative for Minister Louis Farrakhan, was present to remind Reparations Advocates of the Nation of Islam's 40-year history of support for Reparations, and its consistent call for land for African Americans, here and abroad. Also present were representatives from the United Church of Christ, another predominantly white faith based organization with 6000 churches and over 1.4 Million members.

The day's focus was on CBC members who have not endorsed H.R. 40, although one group chose to visit CBC members who had already endorsed the bill to thank them for their support. Of the eight members of the CBC visited, five committed to endorse H.R. 40—Congressmen Major Owens

focus his energies. In addition to the five CBC members who agreed to endorse H.R.40, Congressman James Moran of northern Virginia also agreed to endorse the bill.

A group of Maryland residents met with the Legislative assistant for Congressman Steny Hoyer, who is the Democratic Whip, and a member of the Appropriations committee. The Democratic Whip is the second highest-ranking position amongst House Democrats. The assistant expressed concerns about the use of the term "Reparations" in the H.R. 40 Bill and felt that consideration should be given to deleting it in order to move to the next level. He suggested that once the word "Reparations" is deleted there might be more willingness to take a serious look at the Bill. Future lobbying efforts will also include visits to Congressman Hoyer to discuss this matter further.

A small group also began a preliminary search for a Senator or Senators who might be persuaded to co-introduce a bill in the Senate. Although it is premature at this time to identify the names of the Senators that were approached, it is safe to report that the discussions were fruitful, and future meetings are planned to provide additional information.



Strategy meeting in Con. Conyers' (9th from left) office: Mr. Keenan Keller (5th), Mr. Milt McGriff (6th), Ms. Kibibi Tyehimba (7th), Ms. Dorothy Lewis (8th), Ms. Nkechi Taifa (10th), Mr. Hilary Shelton

of New York, John Lewis of Georgia, Alcee Hastings and Kendrick Meek of Florida, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas. Congressman Melvin Watts declined to commit until voters from his state of North Carolina made it plain that they wanted him to endorse the bill. Congressman Clyburn of South Carolina refuses to endorse the bill for the same reason. (We urge registered voters in these two states who are also Reparations Advocates to contact these two Congressmen and urge their support of this important issue.) The Legislative Assistant for Congressman Donald Payne of New Jersey indicated the Congressman had problems with the bill, so a future visit is in order to clarify his concerns. The Legislative Assistant for Congressman Robert Scott of Virginia stated the Congressman does not currently support the bill because he believes there are not sufficient funds available to pay Reparations and he believes this administration's Faith-based initiative is the place to

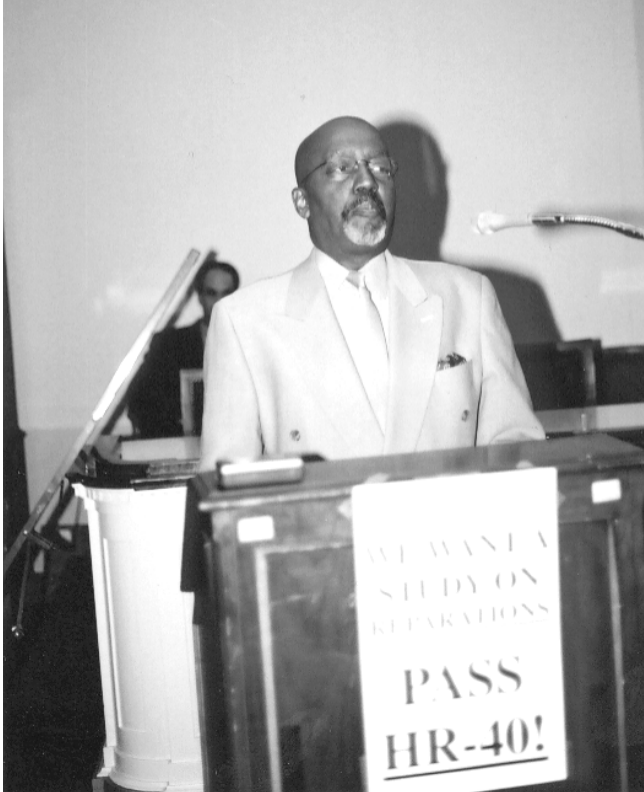
In addition to a full day of lobbying, to commemorate Reparations Awareness Day, the Library of Congress hosted its first Reparations forum. We extend our sincere appreciation to Ms. Marita Harper for her organizing efforts and for having the foresight to make it happen. DC NCOBRA Co-Chairs Mr. Wautella ibn Yusuf and Ms. Kibibi Tyehimba participated in the panel discussion along with Mr. Keenan Keller, Judiciary Counsel to Congressman Conyers, and Ms. Janis Hazel, formerly a member of Congressman Conyers' staff, in 1989, and part of the team of writers of the Reparations Study Bill H.R. 40. Ms. Hazel is currently a producer at Howard University's television station WHUT, and has expressed an interest in creating opportunities for broadcasting Reparations Forum in order to reach a broader audience.

February 25, 2003 was definitely a good use of time and energy. Hopefully future lobbying sessions will produce similar results. DC NCOBRA Chapter and the Philadelphia Coalition will return to the Hill on March 26. New York will mobilize their coalition for a day of lobbying on April 9. On May 20, in commemoration of Malcolm X's birthday, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey,

AYBP (Continued from page 12)

New York, and Pennsylvania will join forces to “Turn Up the Volume” a little higher.

The Northeast region is on the move, in large part because of the dedication and persistence of Mr. Milt



**Mr. Milton McGriff,
National AYBP Coordinator**

McGriff who was inspired almost two years ago by the words of Mr. Randall Robinson, in his book “The Debt”. Robinson called for a thousand African descendants to walk the halls of Congress every day until the issue of Reparations is addressed. Although we’re a ways away from a 1000 per day, we are off to a good start, and there’s hope that “A Year of Black Presence” will make a tremendous impact on the Reparations Movement. In the words of Mr. Milt McGriff:

“We must make the nation see, that Reparations for people of African descent is a matter of justice, that it is a moral issue before it is an economic or political issue. Many, possibly the majority of Americans, say we should not be talking about Reparations now, that the wrongs committed against Black people are ancient history. But we must force Congress to discuss Reparations now because, in the past, our government has been too overtly racist to do what was right. The impact of Jim Crow and the Holocaust of captivity and enslavement is still felt today. The government professes to have moved beyond

the racist thinking of the past. We call on them to prove it by passing HR40 and having a long overdue discussion about repairing the damage done by the crimes of the past.”

The N’COBRA Legislative Commission urges Reparations advocates in other states to pick up the baton and keep the momentum going. Work to build coalitions in your area. Organize to get your cities and states to adopt Reparations Resolutions and Bills, and provide documentation once resolutions and bills are adopted so that N’COBRA can add your information to its database. Contact the N’COBRA Legislative Commission at 202.466.1622 or by email at LegiCom@AOL.com for a sample resolution and Lobbying Packets to ensure consistency in our lobbying efforts. Mobilize your communities to visit the home offices of your Congressmen and Congresswomen. Organize groups to come to the nation’s Capitol to continue lobbying and to demonstrate to the country that we will not rest until Reparations is won. Remember, “The Power to Win Reparations is in Our Hands.”

CAMPAIGN FOR 100% (Continued from page 8)

Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee, Texas (D)
Rep. Alcee Hastings, Florida (D)
Rep. John Lewis, Georgia (D) -
Rep. Major Owens, New York (D)
Rep. Jim Moran, Virginia (D)

Below is the contact information for the Congressional Black Caucus members who have not co-sponsored the bill to date. Exercise your rights as a tax paying, hopefully registered voters. Mobilize voting Reparations supporters in the districts of the CBC members who have not endorsed the bill, and let them know you expect their support for H.R. 40.

Rep. Denise Majette Georgia (4th District :DeKalb and Gwinett Counties) Committees: Budget, Small Business, Education and the Workforce, 1517 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: 202-225-1605

Rep David Scott Georgia(13th District:Butts, Clayton, Dekalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton, Rockdale, Spaulding, Walton Counties) 417 Cannon House Office Building , Washington, DC 20515 phone: (202) 225-2939

Rep. Corrine Brown, Florida (D) - 3rd Congressional District (Jacksonville, Orlando, Daytona Beach)Committees: Transportation and Infrastructure, Veterans' Affairs 2444 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-0123

Rep. Julia Carson, Indiana (D) - 10th Congressional District (Indianapolis)Committees: Financial Services, Veterans' Affairs 1339 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-4011

(Continued on page 14)

National Congress of Economic Development Commissioners

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Elder William Jones and Dr. Imari A. Obadele

Chicago, Illinois

Cecelia Butler
Melvin Cosey
Rev. Albert Sampson
Dr. Robert Starks
Dr. Conrad Worrill

Cincinnati, Ohio

Dr. Stanley Broadnax

Dallas, Texas

Diana Kimble and Helene Reese

Detroit, Michigan

Kwame Atta
Dr. Robert Bland
Mother Lillian Brown
Adwoa Faune Carter
Mary Hines
Raymond "Reparations Ray" Jenkins
Kwame Kenyatta
Queen Mother Nefertiti
Dr. JoAnn Watson

Houston/Prairie View, Texas

Robin J. Anderson, Doris Cleveland and
Simon Wiltz

Indianapolis, Indiana

**Kamau Jywanza, Achebe Turner and
Mauguiro Sadiki Yisael**

Miami/Dade, Florida

Violet Barry
Dr. Mae Christian
Leroy Jones
General Ali K.X. Rashid

St. Louis, Missouri

Alvin Brown,
Richard Dockett
Alphonso Lumpkins

CAMPAIGN FOR 100% *(Continued from page 13)*

Del. Donna Christian-Christensen, Virgin Islands (D)
Committees: Resources, Small Business 1510 Longworth
House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-
1790

Rep. William "Lacy" Clay, Jr., Missouri (D) - 1st
Congressional District(St. Louis)Committees: Financial
Services, Government Reform 415 Cannon House Office
Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-2406

Rep. Eva Clayton, North Carolina (D) - 1st Congressional
District (Greenville, North Carolina) Committees:
Agriculture, Budget 2440 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 202-225-3101

Rep. James Clyburn, South Carolina (D) - 6th
Congressional District(Columbia, Charleston, Orangeburg,
Sumter)Committees: Appropriations 319 Cannon House
Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-3315

Rep. Harold Ford, Jr., Tennessee (D) - 9th Congressional
District(Memphis)Committees: Financial Services,
Education and the Workforce 325 Cannon House Office
Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-3265

Rep Artur Davis Alabama (7th District, Montgomery
208 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC
20515 phone: 202-225-2665

Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Ohio (D) - 11th
Congressional District (Cleveland) Committees: Financial
Services, Small Business 1516 Longworth House Office
Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-7032

Rep. Donald Payne, New Jersey (D) - 10th Congressional
District(Newark, Elizabeth)Committees: Education and the
Workforce, International Relations 2209 Rayburn House
Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-3436

Rep. Robert Scott, Virginia (D) - 3rd Congressional
District (Richmond, Newport News)Committees: Judiciary,
Education and the Workforce 2464 Rayburn House Office
Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-8351

Rep. Melvin Watt, North Carolina (D) - 12th Con. District
(Charlotte, Greensboro)Committees: Judiciary, Financial
Services 2236 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 202-225-1510

Southwest Regional *(Continued from page 6)*

with. During a leadership track there were important discussions about the importance of developing leadership in our chapters, and the importance of performing all tasks as efficiently as possible. Some participants went on a brief tour

of the African American Museum. There was also a panel discussion entitled "Perspectives on Reparations" which examined the importance of genealogy and documentation, and the legal and legislative approaches to Reparations.

Some News from Around Our Reparations Movement

MISSISSIPPIANS FOR REPARATIONS

Thinking back to the organizing struggles of Sister Fannie Lou Hamer, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, one can only wonder about the challenges facing anyone audacious enough to carry the baton for the Reparations Movement in the state that was once considered the most hostile during the Civil Right Movement. For the likes of Mississippi State Coordinator, Baba Hannibal Afrik and the Mississippians for Reparations (MFR) Coalition, the knowledge of that history seems only to have made them more determined. The MFR is made up of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA), the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), and the Millions for Reparations Coalition. The MFR coalition conducts town hall meetings throughout the state of Mississippi to bring critical information about the Reparations movement to the people, and give them an opportunity to discuss the truth that has been suppressed for far too long. Like the vicious murder of 14-year old Emmett Till, whose murderers remain unpunished to this day. The MFR is on the front line circulating post card petitions, which demand the State Attorney General re-open the investigation. The coalition is also urging the Mississippi Faith community to become the moral vanguard and lead the way in declaring the Holocaust of African Enslavement morally wrong and worthy of Reparations.

The efforts of the MFR coalition are not going unnoticed. The city of Jackson, Mississippi adopted a resolutions sponsored by Councilman Kenneth Stokes, designating February National Reparations Month, and another honoring Baba Hannibal Afrik for outstanding citizenship, and proclaiming him an honorary citizen of the city.

Baba Hannibal Afrik, MS State Coordinator
Phone: 601.535.7551

Mississippians For Reparations
P. O. Box 225
Port Gibson, MS 39150

N'COBRA Retreat Held in North Carolina

Our Board of Directors, Chapter leaders and Commission workers met recently in historic Princeville, North Carolina for the first-ever N'COBRA Retreat. Hosted by Brother Milton Bullock, and facilitated by N'COBRA members, Kenneth Young and Catherine Copper of The Real One, LLC., the Retreat provided leaders a chance to access N'COBRA's history and evaluate the work that had been done over the years. A Strategic Planning Committee was established to develop a long-term plan of action to improve

N'COBRA's effectiveness. All attendees agreed, that the retreat was time very well spent.

Global Afrikan Congress

N'COBRA was well represented at the African/ African Descendants follow-up conference to the U.N. World Conference Against Racism. Attending the special gathering in the African-Caribbean nation of Barbados this past October were National Co-Chair Dorothy Aurevouche Benton Lewis, International Commission Co-Chair Kamau and Mashriki Jywanza, the new Information Co-Chair Wautella ibn Yusuf, DC Chapter Co-Chair Kibbibi Tyehimba, and other members.

This significant meeting resulted in the formation of the Global Afrikan Congress. Sister Aurevouche was elected as one of two Steering Committee Representatives for North America (the other resides in Canada). Regional (continental) conferences are being planned—including a December planning meeting in Toronto, and another major gathering of Africans in the Diaspora in 2004.

Reparations Awareness Day

For nearly a decade N'COBRA chapters across the U.S. have organized special "Reparations Awareness Day" events on February 25th or during the last weekend of that month. Please inform us of your plans so they can be shared with others.

N'COBRA Sends Condolences To...

The family of N'COBRA member **CLEVELAND LEE ARMSTRONG, SR.**, who became an Ancestor in September 2002. Baba Cleveland was the beloved husband of member Elizabeth Armstrong, grandfather of Chioke Bakari, and father of Jahahara Alkebulan-Ma'at.

The family of Viola Plummer of the December 12th Movement on the passing of her husband, Baba **JIMMY PLUMMER**

{The following excerpts taken from "NewAfrika@aol.com" message posted to N'COBRA's website "Reparations for Africans"}

With sadness, we announce that **BROTHER ROB PENNY**, at age 62, passed away Sunday night, March 16, 2003, in Pittsburgh, PA. Rob Penny and his Beautiful Wife Timamu Betty were foremost in leading the struggle for Reparations, Unity and Upliftment.

(Continued on page 16)

N'COBRA NATIONAL FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

By Ajamu Sankofa, Northeast Region Representative

" We cannot continue so. For a refusal to change direction, for the abandonment of the way, for such perverse persistence there are no reasons, only hollow, unconvincing lies."

Ayi Kwei Armah from two thousand seasons

On January 18, 2003, N'COBRA launched its powerful National Five year Strategic Plan. The Plan crystallizes N'COBRA's fifteen years of valuable experience in creating the contemporary Reparations movement within the United States into a roadmap with guideposts that leads inexorably to the destination of winning full Reparations for Black African decedents residing within the United States of America and its territories

N'COBRA's sharp perspective is sown into the kente cloth fabric of the strategic plan's mission statement:

" The mission of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) is to win full Reparations for Black African decedents residing in the United States and its territories for the genocidal war against Africa that created the TransAtlantic Slave "Trade," "Chattel Slavery," Jim Crow and Chattel Slavery's continuing vestiges (the Maafa). To that end, N'COBRA shall organize and mobilize all strata of these Black communities into an effective mass-based reparations movement. N'COBRA shall also serve as a coordinating body for the reparations effort in the United States. Further, through its leadership role in the reparations movement within the United states and its territories, N'COBRA recognizes that reparations is a just demand for all African peoples and shall join with others in building the international reparationsmovement."

This mission statement tells us what is to be done. The

balance of the strategic plan tells us how we are to get it done. The completion of the strategic plan was a high point, a profound example of N'COBRA expressing collective work and responsibility (UJIMA) and demonstrating the limitless power of African unity in a c t i o n .

Among the highlights of the strategic plan are: assurances that N'COBRA will have an expanded national office with a paid staff with the state of the art equipment that will ensure communications capacities that connect N'COBRA directly and immediately to African people throughout the United States, Africa, and the African Diaspora; the development of more efficient and responsive internal administrative and management systems; establishment of the highest standards of professionalism; and the creation of the capacity to sustain and expand ever stronger national grassroots organizing campaigns such as Reparations Awareness Day, election of Economic Development Commissioners, A Year of Black Presence (AYBP), BLACK FRIDAYS, and Mobilizing for Reparations National Campaign: Reparations in Action .

The Reparations movement is a world historical movement that accelerates at the speed of spirit, the awakening of African consciousness. N'COBRA is both the result of and a contributor to this powerful awakening of the African mind. N'COBRA's Five Year Strategic Plan is now another essential tool to further unlock our consciousness and take African people to the next higher level to win this sacred struggle of winning full Reparations for African people in o u r l i f e t i m e .

Ashe to N'COBRA's Strategic Planning Committee and N'COBRA's National Board for brilliantly taking the strategic plan from concept to completion!

BROTHER ROB PENNY (Continued from page 15)

Pan African Rob Penny N'COBRA Rob Penny Reparations Rob Penny was a member of N'COBRA for 7 years. As the unifying force behind the Pittsburgh Chapter of NCOBRA, Rob Penny gave unselfishly of his time and resources. During the 2001 Northeast Regional Conference hosted by the Pittsburgh Chapter he even used his own funds to pay for the meals for all the Northeast Region participants. He frequently purchased large quantities of books and other cultural materials during N'COBRA's annual conferences to take back to his community as gifts. Rob Penny utilized the DC N'COBRA Chapter's book "Black Reparations" during classes that he taught at the University of Pittsburgh. He was always willing to do whatever he could to move us closer to achieving Reparations.

Black Arts Movement Rob Penny Kuntu Writers Workshop Rob Penny Black Horizons Poet Rob Penny Rob Penny Black Radical Congress Rob Penny Black Community Rob Penny Playwright Rob Penny Children and Youth Rob Penny Beginning with Books Rob Penny Historian Rob Penny On the Hill Rob Penny Afrikan. Rob Penny, Professor/Playwright/Poet was an award winning writer and historian. Born in Opelika, Alabama, raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he always called "Home", Rob Penny was an Afrocentric poet, playwright, Chair of the Department of Africana Studies at the

JAPANESE AMERICANS FOR BLACK REPARATIONS

Japanese Americans Black Reparations Support Statement

As members of the Japanese American community, we offer our support for Black Reparations. Our community undertook a decades-long struggle to achieved the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which granted an apology and monetary compensation to survivors who endured racist and unconstitutional detention and incarceration during World War II. Our struggle for redress was born in part out of the Black Civil Rights Movement and the support of African Americans was essential to our success.

Today, we take a long overdue step by calling for complete justice and standing in full support of reparations for 250 years of slavery and the subsequent institutionalized racism and disenfranchisement of Blacks in America. Today, we offer our presence, our experience as Japanese American recipients of reparations, and our commitment to education and advocacy for Black Reparations as determined by African Americans.

Toward this end we call for support by Japanese Americans, and indeed all Americans, for H.R. 40, Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, as introduced by Congressman Conyers to Congress every year since 1989. We further call for support for other legal actions that seek reparations. We are committed to the continuing education about the history of slavery and its legacy, and we pledge support for all struggles that lead us toward social and economic justice for Blacks in America.

Signed by:

Yuri Kochiyama, Kenji Liu, Mari Matsuda, Dale Minami, Janice Mirikitani, Susan Serrano, Dina Shek, Rev. Lloyd Wake, Eric Yamamoto and Rev. Michael Yoshii

Japanese Americans for Black Reparations Principles and Commitments

Principles

We, as Japanese American community members who have seen redress from our government for unconstitutional abuses for during World War II, believe in the righteousness of the struggle for Black Reparations and call upon the U.S. government to make significant amends for the history of slavery and its legacy.

We believe in the need for multi-racial support for Black Reparations and we recognize that participating in this struggle is essential to the healing of the nation as a whole.

We believe that African Americans are the only ones who can determine the means and objectives of reparations, and we pledge our support for the proposals put forth by the African American community.

We believe that reparations begins with each of us. As such, we will make monetary contributions to local and national efforts in support of racial justice in America.

Commitments

We stand in support of H.R. 40 and will advocate for its passage.

We offer our experiences in the Japanese American redress movement and will establish a website with articles, resources and statements of support from the JA community.

We offer financial contributions to legal efforts for reparations and community initiatives that work to repair the damage done by slavery in America.

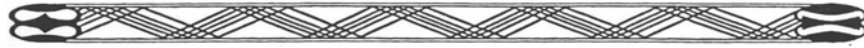
For more information, please contact Dian Shek at: dina@asianimprov.com.

BROTHER ROB PENNY *(Continued from page 16)*

University of Pittsburgh from 1978 -1984, and a professor since 1969. Rob Penny was Playwright in Residence for Kuntu Repertory Theatre. In 1976 Rob Penny and August Wilson Co-founded the Kuntu Writers Workshop, the 2nd oldest Black

Writers Workshop that is still in existence today. He co-founded the Black Horizon Theatre with August Wilson in 1968. Rob Penny brought life, love and passion for life to his family, his friendships and throughout the Black Community. A beautiful Black Man, Loving Husband and Father, Grandfather. Fantastic Friend. Phenomenal Man. Writer of Expressions of Pride, Heritage, History, Celebration, Unity, Movement of and for our Precious People. We love you always, Rob Penny!

N'COBRA'S Information Sheet



What is Reparations?

Reparations is a process of repairing, healing and restoring a people injured because of their group identity and in violation of their fundamental human rights by governments or corporations. Those groups that have been injured have the right to obtain from the government or corporation responsible for the injuries that which they need to repair and heal themselves. In addition to being a demand for justice, it is a principle of international human rights law. As a remedy, it is similar to the remedy for damages in national law that holds a person responsible for injuries suffered by another when the infliction of the injury violates domestic law. Examples of groups that have obtained reparations include Jewish victims of the Nazi Holocaust, Japanese Americans interned in concentration camps in the United States during WWII, Alaska Natives for land, labor, and resources taken, victims of the massacre in Rosewood, Florida and their descendants, Native Americans as a remedy for violations of treaty rights, an political dissenters in Argentina and their descendants.

What is N'COBRA?

The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America is a mass-based coalition organized for the sole purpose of obtaining reparations for African descendants in the United States. It was organized in late 1987 and early 1988, to broaden the base of support for the long-standing reparations movement. Organizational founders of N'COBRA include the New Afrikan Peoples Organization, the National Conference of Black Lawyers and the Republic of New Afrika. It has individual members and organizational affiliates, a few of which include the National Association of Black Social Workers, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, National Black United Front, Black Reparations Commission, and the International Peoples' Democratic Uhuru Movement. N'COBRA has chapters throughout the U. S. and in Ghana and London. It is directed nationally by a board of

Why are African Descendants entitled to Reparations?

The Trans-Atlantic Slave "Trade" and chattel slavery, more appropriately called the Holocaust of Enslavement or Maafa, was a crime against humanity. Millions of Africans were brutalized, murdered, raped and tortured. They were torn from their families in Africa, kidnapped and lost family and community associations. African peoples in the United States and the prior colonies, were denied the right to maintain their language, spiritual practices and even normal family relations, always under the threat of being torn from newly created families at the whim of the "slave owner." This form of dehumanization, chattel slavery, lasted officially from 1619 to 1865. This was followed by 100 years of virtual re-enslavement through a series of laws and practices such as Black Codes, convict lease, sharecropping, peonage, and Jim Crow practices of separate and unequal accommodations. African descendants continue to be denied rights of self-determination, inheritance, and full participation in the United States government and society. The laws and practices in the United States continue to treat African peoples in a manner similar to slavery - maintaining dual systems in virtually every area of life including punishment, health care, education and wealth, maintaining the fiction of White superiority and African and African descendants inferiority.

Those groups that have been injured have the right to obtain from the government or corporation responsible for the injuries that which they need to repair and heal themselves.

Is an apology necessary?

A necessary requirement of all forms of reparations is an acknowledgment by the government or corporation that it committed acts that violated the human rights of those making the claim for reparations. Some groups may want an explicit apology, however, neither the acknowledgement nor apology is sufficient - there must be material forms of reparations that accompany the acknowledgment or apology.

{to be continued in next issue}

N'COBRA

National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America

P.O. Box 90604 Washington, DC 20090-0604

PHONE: 202.291.8400 FAX: 202.291.4600

EMAIL: NationalNCOBRA@aol.com WEBSITE: www.ncobra.org

DISCUSSION: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Reparations_For_Africans

N'COBRA's Board of Directors

Dorothy Aurevouche Benton Lewis, Co-Chair
(Rockville, Maryland)

Jahahara Amen-RA Alkebulan-Ma'at, Co-Chair
(Oakland, California)

Kupenda Olusegun, Treasurer
(Washington, DC)

Lady Claudia Nelson, Secretary
(Dallas, Texas)

Dr. Imari Obadele, Emeritus and Ex-Officio
(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)

Dr. Frank Omowale Satterwhite, Western Region
Representative (East Palo Alto, California)

Njere Alghanee, Southeast Region Rep
(Atlanta, Georgia)

James Rodgers III, Southwest Region
Representative (Dallas, TX)

Alvin Brown, Midwest Region Rep
(St. Louis, Missouri)

Ajamu Sankofa, Northeast Region Rep
(Brooklyn, New York)

Baba Hannibal Afrik, At-Large
(Port Gibson, Mississippi)

Kalonji Tor Olusegun, At-Large
(Washington, DC)

H. Khalif Khalifah, At-Large
(Dreweryville, Virginia)

JoAnn Watson, At-Large
(Detroit, Michigan)

Erline Arikpo, Elder Advisor
(Chicago, Illinois)

Raymond "Reparations Ray" Jenkins, Elder Advisor
(Detroit, Michigan)

General Ali X. Rashid, Elder Advisor
(Miami, Florida)

General Mwesi Chui, Elder Advisor
(Dayton, Ohio)

Nia Kuumba, Elder Advisor
(Washington, DC)

Dr. Ron Walters, Elder Advisor
(College Park, Maryland)

*N'COBRA's Commissions also have representation
on our Board of Directors.*

N'COBRA's Commission Leaders

Economic Development

Alvin Brown (St. Louis, MO)
Taiwo Kugichagulia (Oakland, CA)
Baba Dr. Imari Obadele (BR, LA)

Education

Dr. Mary Hoover (Washington, DC)

Human Resources

Njere Alghanee (Atlanta, GA)
H. Khalif Khalifah (Dreweryville, VA)

Information and Media

JoAnn Watson (Detroit, MI)
Wautella ibn Yusuf (Washington, DC)
Jahahara Alkebulan-Ma'at (Oakland, CA)

International

Mashariki Jywanza (Indianapolis, IN)

Legal Strategies

Adjoa Aiyetoro (Washington, DC)

Legislative

Nkechi Taifa (Washington, DC)
Kibibi Tyehimba (Washington, DC)
Milton McGriff (Philadelphia, PA)

Membershi/Organizational Development

Kupenda Olusegun (Washington, DC)
Johnita Scott (Baton Rouge, LA)
Frank Omowale Satterwhite (E. PA, CA)

Youth

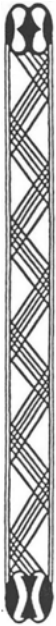
Maya Watson (Detroit, MI)

Your Expertise and Participation Are Needed.

Join An N'COBRA Commission!

N'COBRA

National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America
P.O. Box 90604
Washington, DC 20090-0604



Address

In This Issue...

*N'COBRA'S LITIGATION WORK &
REPARATIONS LOBBYISTS ON CAPITOL HILL!*

We are especially grateful to founding member Baba Kalonji Tor Olusegun for designing the N'COBRA logo (above). It consists of three sacred Andinkra symbols: NKON-SONKONSON (link or chain); OWA FOR A ADOBE (snake climbing the palm tree); and, BIRIBI-WO-SORO (a symbol of Hope denoting there is something in the Heavens). Together, these symbols express our links in this, and the next life; that We share a common blood relation which will never break apart; and that We can perform the impossible.

ATTENTION REPARATIONS ADVOCATES

FACT: The Reparations Movement cannot be advanced without the support of African (Black) People.

FACT: African (Black) People cannot and should not expect anyone other than ourselves to provide the resources needed to win our Reparations.

FACT: If you do not keep your membership up to date, you will no longer receive the invaluable information found in this newsletter.

Do your part to move us closer to achieving Reparations. Contribute generously to NCOBRA. Renew Your NCOBRA membership each year. Encourage other Reparations supporters to join NCOBRA. Host fundraisers for NCOBRA and contribute the funds to NCOBRA projects that you feel passionately about. And remember the Power to Win Reparations is In our Hands! Reparations: Conceive It...Achieve It!